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The Million-Click Thinking Tip

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Buffalo State
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

The Million-Click Thinking Tip

A Project in
Creative Studies

by

Sarah Thurber

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Masters of Science

May 2012

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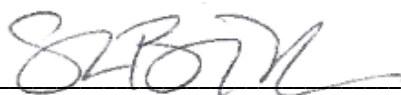
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May 4, 2012



Sarah B. Thurber
Student

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ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

The Million-Click Thinking Tip

“The Million-click Thinking Tip” is a social media project. Its ultimate goal is to share tools, tips and insights from the field of creativity with people around the world. Its more immediate goals were to provide a framework for author and speaker Sarah Thurber to learn about public speaking, social media dynamics and message penetration. The five two-minute videos resulting from the project are posted on Youtube.com. They garnered hundreds of hits in their initial weeks online and continue to reach new audiences through Youtube.com, Facebook.com, LinkedIn.com and Twitter.com. The tips created in this project will serve as a prototype for future development of a “Thinking Tip Series” from the FourSight publishing company.



Sarah B. Thurber

May 4, 2012

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It took a veritable village to produce this project. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my tough coaches as well as my gentle support team.

To our distance learning coordinator, Cyndi Burnett, for insisting that I "date" and even "get engaged" to several different Master's projects before I married one; to my academic advisor, Sue Keller-Mather, for letting this project go on a long leash; to marketing guru, Lawrence Niesler, for giving two-thumbs-up to my first homemade video tip, to my sounding board partner and personal creative director, Dorte Nielsen, whose brilliant ideas pop up all over this project; to videographer, Doug Haight, for shooting the tips, shooting my professional headshot, and gently shooting down the idea that I video the tips myself; to radioblogger, Sue Cain, for inviting me to do my first radio interview; to film professional, Liz Reeves, who borrowed my sweater and loaned me Margie Newman, a professional presentation coach; to Margie Newman, for making a silk purse out of me; to friend and coach, Andrea Gaines, who encouraged me to speak from the heart; to sales coach, Diane Testa, who reminded me that sales is a 5-letter word; to "Tip Video" expert, Charlie Stone, for consulting on the nature of tips, the 21st century attention span and search optimization; to colleague, Russ Schoen, for feedback, Brainshark and moments of sanity; to creative leadership expert, Jonathan Vehar, for always playing on the A-team; to my parents, who didn't seem to notice that it took me 25 years to get to graduate school; to my in-laws who picked up slack, picked up children and provided unflagging support; to my children, Cole, Isabel and Rebecca who cheerily did laundry, cooking and homework with me; and to Blair Miller, who remains my first love in the field of creativity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Background to the Project	1
Section 2: Pertinent Literature.....	6
Section 3: Process Plan.....	16
Section 4: Outcomes.....	21
Section 5: Key Learnings	27
Section 6: Conclusion.....	33
References	37
Appendices	39
A. Concept Paper	
B. Links to the <i>Two-Minute Thinking Tips</i>	
C. Script Sample	
D. Email to Solicit “Clicks”	
E. Search Optimization Strategies	
F. Youtube.com Analytics	
G. Daily Click Counter	
H. Official Headshot and Biography	

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Tips Titles, Subtitles and Topics.....	23
Table 2. SEO Strategies	27

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The FourSightOnline Channel on March 31	22
Figure 2. Before and After Feedback.....	24
Figure 3. The New Public Image	25
Figure 4. Journal Entries, March 29 & 30	26
Figure 5. Journal Entry, March 22	34
Figure 6. Results for “Innovative Teams” in Youtube Search.....	35
Figure 7. The FourSightonline Channel on April 28, 2012	37

Section One: Background to the Project

Purpose and Description of Project

Epiphany

Back in June 2011, I sat at the desk in my linoleum-tiled dorm room at Buffalo State College and had an epiphany. I wrote it on a post-it note and stuck it on the desk. It said simply: **OSA**. The O and S stood for “operating system.” The little triangle (which is the Greek letter for “delta”) meant change. An Operating System for Change: “**OSA**” was my newly devised shorthand to describe an operating system to deal with constant change.

A second year graduate student at the International Center for Studies in Creativity, I suddenly realized that’s what my graduate studies were all about. I was getting a “brain upgrade” to my mental operating system. The professors variously referred to it as “creativity,” “innovation,” “change leadership” or “creative problem solving.” Call it what you will. What I was learning was **OSA** — an operating system to deal with constant change.

It’s a good thing, because constant change is what we’ve got. Hundreds of years from now, scholars will reflect on the turn of this millennium as a pivotal point in human history. It’s when the Internet sprang to life. As a historical event, it ranks along with the discovery of agriculture (which took a lot longer than a decade to roll out), the Guttenberg press (whose impact was slowed by massive illiteracy, but eventually resulted in the Reformation and the Age of Enlightenment), and the Industrial Age (which prompted the creation of an entire public education system), (Freidman, 2005).

All of these events were marked with the same fundamental distinction – they created the possibility, and ultimately the demand, for *much* greater information exchange. In the case of agriculture, people could make permanent settlements and spend time thinking, not scavenging for food. In the case of the printing press, books no longer had to be hand lettered, so books, and therefore reading, became more prevalent. In the case of the Industrial Revolution required a massive education effort to staff the enterprise. But when it comes to information, the Internet Age has more of everything: speed, breadth and volume.

With the advent of the Internet, never before has so much information been accessible so quickly to so many. The result? Power structures have overturned in Egypt, Syria, Libya and Burma. Twitter and Facebook have kicked up a cultural revolution in the Middle East (Goodman, 2011). The massive spread of information is changing the way humans are organizing themselves. It bears out the prediction that Margaret Wheatley makes in her 1992 book *Leadership and the New Science* where she says the influx of new information prompts change, causing groups to self-organize in new ways to accommodate the new reality. New information results in growth, change and evolutionary adaptation.

Like in any disruption, there are those clever enough to adapt (innovators), there are those frightened enough to retrench (fundamentalists), and then there are the rest of us, who are waiting for things to get back to normal (Gutsche, 2009).

But change is the new black. It *is* the new normal. It's going to be with us for a while.

Up a Creek Without a Process

Little was built into our education system to teach us to respond to such an era of rapid change. We inherited educational systems that served factory workers and industrialists

(Robinson, 2011) Most of us are trying to apply an education filled with *right* answers to a world teeming with open-ended questions and multiple answers. In my own corner of the world, I see moms, kids, dads, grandparents, teachers and neighbors struggling to sort this out. I also see a distinct gap between what most people know and what they need to know about effective thinking. We don't need answers. The answers change too fast. We need processes for discovery, creation and insight. We need an upgrade to our mental operating system. We need **OSA**.

For decades, the International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) and other creativity organizations have offered some interesting, alternative views of how to solve problems and facilitate smart, flexible, original thinking (Puccio, Mance & Murdock 2010). The formal study of creativity offers us some new answers, which collectively function like an operating system for change —**OSA**. These insights have the potential to help us all look good in the little black dress of change.

Rationale for Selection: Check your Insights at the Door

Sorry, We're Looking for Something Simpler

But the message in its current packaging is too complex. The bouncer at the popular press door is looking for something a little younger and a little sexier. The deliberate, research-based, process-bound insights from ICSC are not making headlines (Puccio, 2012). Quite the contrary, in some areas of the popular press, the Center is actively maligned, misunderstood and diminished (Lehrer, 2012).

Why isn't ICSC's world-class information and inquiry into the field of creativity reaching a worldwide audience? How might we correct that? I'm up for that investigation. As I see it, the job has two parts. First, to make a deliberate study of: What voices break through? What media

support that? What theories grab hold? What speakers go viral? (i.e. what's sexy and/or cool enough to get past the popular press bouncers?) Second, to figure out how might I package this information in a way that will help it break through, grab hold and go viral. It's comically overambitious. Just my cup of tea.

Cardinal Rules of Creativity

Then there's the little matter of content. Exactly what would you communicate to a popular audience, if you could? What are the "cardinal rules" of creativity, or the "key OSΔ takeaways?" Below are a few that I would like to see enter everyday parlance:

- Everyone is creative
- Creativity takes effort
- Deliberate creativity works
- Take turns diverging and converging
- Learn the 4-step Creative Process (FourSight model)
- Enhance your thinking ability with tools and exercises
- Manage your thinking preferences, or they'll manage you

I see myself giving voice to those insights with a combination of good, old-fashioned storytelling and fun, fast technology. I intend to cultivate a voice that breaks through the noise and offers people insights and tools from the field of creativity that let them transform their experience and give them the power to make their own change.

My aim is to create a vehicle that can broadcast these ideas—widely. What better vehicle than the Internet, the very thing that precipitated all this change in the first place. Yesterday's soapbox has given way to today's blog. Twitter and Facebook take messages "viral" on the web.

I've called my project "The Million-click Thinking Tip" because my aim is to take the cardinal rules of creativity and integrate them into a social media product that could go viral. The specific nature of the product, detailed more fully in Chapter 3, is to create a series of two-minute thinking tips (research-based, actionable insights), that will live on the web and, over time, collectively, tally over a million clicks.

For me, the project brings together five strands: 1) my early career as a professional writer, editor and information designer; 2) my current career as managing partner of the FourSight publishing company, a firm dedicated to producing world-class, research-based training materials in creativity and innovation; 3) my personal desire to share the power of creativity with an "everyday" audience; 4) my fascination with what makes a voice extraordinary enough to break the surface; and 5) my desire to cultivate an extraordinary voice of my own.

I will dedicate the next three months to weaving those strands together and to figure out: How to make a product that connects to people so intensely and so personally that they simply have to share it? How can I cultivate an extraordinary voice?

Section Two: Pertinent Literature

Sources & Influences

The intellectual mentors I have chosen for “The Million-click Thinking Tip” project are an eclectic mix of serious academic researchers and popular cultural influencers. I am keen to study not only the masters of content (i.e. academic researchers who have brought insights into the field of creative studies) but also the masters of popular spin (i.e. million-click wonders like Sir Ken Robinson and Daniel Pink who have brought some of those insights to the masses).

In the spirit of my project, I will resist the impulse to write a long, threaded narrative detailing the academic origins of this project. Rather, I will describe the people who most influenced my thinking in a series of social-media-sized blurbs, which include a mini-bio and two rating systems I devised that highlight both their scholarly and popular influence.

The first rating — the “Google Scholar” rating — shows the number of results I found when searching each individual in Google Scholar. The “results” number is followed a “citations” number, which is the sum of all the citations in their top five most-cited articles.

The second rating — the “YouTube” rating — shows the magnitude of their presence on YouTube. The rating system, again, includes two numbers: The first is the number of “results” that appear when you type that person’s name into the YouTube search engine. The second is the sum of the click counts in their top ten most-viewed videos.

Meet My Key Influencers

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

I am just as interested in Professor Csikszentmihalyi's research as I am in how he managed to bring it to a mass audience. Father of the term "flow" — which essentially means the nexus of disciplined practice and creativity, he not only drew his theory from research, he also managed to penetrate the noise and reach people with his message. I've spoken to him personally about how he achieved this (a persistent literary agent) and will continue to read his books, particularly, *Good Business* (2003), *Finding Flow* (1998) and *The Evolving Self* (1994) to provide content for my "tips." I admire that even in his retirement, Csikszentmihalyi is actively seeking answers and committed to the creation of a new branch of psychology (positive psychology) that will forward the human experience.

Google Scholar Results=39,400 Citations=25,041

YouTube Results=228 Clicks=322,014

In many ways, Jim Kouzes has done exactly what I hope to do in my role as managing partner of FourSight: He launched a research-based assessment, delivered his message to a worldwide audience, and remained true to his values as a transformational leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Kouzes and his partner Barry Posner not only created the Leadership Practices Inventory (1988), but also helped create the field of transformational leadership. Kouzes has generously mentored me in understanding the business path opportunities of the FourSight assessment and in understanding how we might better broadcast the message behind it. When I attended the "Leadership Challenge" workshop in July 2011, I asked him to write an

endorsement for our new FourSight book, *The Innovative Team*. He not only agreed, but read the book and wrote a glowing recommendation. Most importantly, he is a personal role model, because he really appears to “walk his talk.” He is the same person in person that he projects in his book *The Leadership Challenge* (2007). There’s a lot of integrity in that voice.

Google Scholar Results=4,970 Citations=6,685

YouTube Results=41 Clicks=66,927

Dale Carnegie

Carnegie is probably the best example of someone outside of a religious or spiritual order who packaged up a TON of psychological information (most of it, just plain good sense) and made an operating system out of it (1936). Carnegie put his insights into a form that others could find engaging and actionable. He created not only a phenomenal training forum, but also a public speaking mastery course, which I attended in January 2012 as part of this project (2012). I have read and reread his book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, not only for the content but also for an understanding of how he crafted his series of abstract concepts in such a down-to-earth, memorable way that they actually became “sticky.” Though he died in 1955, you can see that his pop culture rationings still soar.

Google Scholar Results=30,300 Citations=1,147

YouTube Results=2,610 Clicks=672,751

Daniel Kahneman

Kahneman is the current “thinking” guru on the best-seller list. Winner of the Nobel Prize for economics, Kahneman has recently published *Thinking Fast and Slow* (2011), which is a

compendium of research on the broad subject of thinking. It includes studies from the behavioral sciences to the neurosciences. While it moves away from the specific focus on creativity, its insights are nonetheless hugely relevant and very credible for an intellectual, *New York Times*-reading cocktail-party crowd. There are good tips buried in those pages. Also, thanks to his notoriety as a Nobel Laureate, he's got high social media ratings.

Google Scholar Results=26,100 Citations=58,301

YouTube Results=137 Clicks=270,084

Jeremy Gutche

When you type "Innovation Keynote" into the YouTube search engine, this is the guy you get (<http://youtu.be/P4gAkM72ah4>). His 28-minute keynote has topped 171,000 views. Gutche is "Mr. Flash" when it comes to Innovation presentations. He's definitely got the younger generation's approach to keynoting: It's all about "edu-tainment." Awesome graphics, gripping stories, big flash-and-wow examples with funny punchlines. He's good. And he's got more than just his charm. He used to be a corporate innovation executive. He touches on creative person, product, environment and process. It's just so darn entertaining that you barely notice. His deftness at social media has him using a more modern balance between graphics and text. Has a book that you can download free off the Internet (2009). It's a good book. He uses it to capture your info to put you on his marketing list. So despite his youth, he really does have some business chops and good marketing instincts. He's an interesting hybrid and a self-made social media presence.

Google Scholar Results=182 Citations=1

YouTube Results=179 Clicks=235,466

Margaret Wheatley

Brilliant. For me, Wheatley is perhaps the most compelling thinker on this list. Her book *Leadership and the New Science* (1992) changed my understanding of how the world works. It fundamentally shifted my thinking paradigm and was so poetically written that I felt grateful and awed by her willingness to share it with me. Not so much a “do-it-yourself” approach, but a highly abstract, theoretical work, almost Copernican in its impact for me. It changed the way I understood organizations: how to grow them and how to lead them. So while she’s not heavy on the prescriptive applied side, it’s one of the most influential books I’ve read.

Google Scholar Results=13,600 Citations=4,728

YouTube Results=85 Clicks=40,158

Abraham Maslow

Forefather of positive psychology, he gave us the idea of self-actualization as something that we could pursue individually and in business. *Maslow on Management* (1998) was the book that inspired Csikszentmihalyi’s book *Good Business* (2003). His pioneering work into positive psychology laid the groundwork for researchers like Martin Seligman and Howard Gardiner follow. Maslow is weak on research, but in the vanguard of thinking. Like Csikszentmihalyi, he has also forged a path to a higher spiritual plain, not through religion, but through psychology.

Google Scholar Results=29,800 Citations=40,811

YouTube Results=1,510 Clicks=261,727

Robert Sternberg

Outstanding for his rigorous and long-term commitment to research in the field of creativity. I plan to plumb his *Cambridge Handbook on Creativity* (2010) to use as the research base for a number of my “Two-Minute Thinking Tips.” He offers a great view of the field of creative studies from “the inside.”

Google Scholar Results=51,000 Citations=7650

YouTube Results=19 Clicks=20,675

Eckart Tolle

A living spiritual teacher, Tolle has influence my thinking about “inner voice” tremendously. In *A New Earth* (2008), he makes the distinction between the “ego” voice and the inner voice. In developing my own voice to create and deliver a keynote, I am so grateful for that distinction. My goal is to channel that inner voice.

Google Scholar Results=2360 Citations=749

YouTube Results=13,600 Clicks=4,603,379

Martin Seligman

Leader of the positive psychology movement and author of *Authentic Happiness* (2002) Seligman is teaching the world to be happier, using research-based advice. That’s a model that I respect and will imitate in my own work as I help people discover their own creativity.

Google Scholar Results=30,200 Citations=23,219

YouTube Results=366 Clicks=491,489

Gerard Puccio

Originator of the FourSight theory, Puccio has refreshed the field of creative problem solving with his Thinking Skills Model. His FourSight assessment has brought it into relevance in modern day business. His academic work as the chair of the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State and his writings on *Creative Leadership* (2010) and his more popular work on *The Innovative Team* (2011) are an important mix of voices for me.

Google Scholar Results=455 Citations=235

YouTube Results=39 Clicks=7,596

Alex Osborn

The granddaddy of Creative Problem Solving (1963) deserves a lot of credit for putting creativity on our radar and focusing hard enough on the concept to divine a process that could be described and repeated. Right now, he's coming in for some criticism as the debate on brainstorming heats up, but the creative process he described starts before and ends after simple brainstorming. He continues to deserve our respect and appreciation. (Results: 3. Clicks: 1,255)

Google Scholar Results=28,200 Citations=4,312

YouTube Results=3 Clicks=1,255

Jonah Lehrer

New author on the creativity scene. Lehrer is the "hot" writer of bestselling books on decision making and creativity (2012). His book *Imagine: How Creativity Works* comes out this March 2012. Meanwhile, his controversial January article in *The New Yorker* puts brainstorming

in the boxing ring, contesting it as the best method to come up with creative ideas. He is the voice to debate. Gerard has already taken him on. This could be fun, and could be very good to up the volume in the field of creative studies. (Results: 149. Clicks: 50,617)

Google Scholar Results=26,100 Citations=58,301

YouTube Results=137 Clicks=270,084

Geoff Colvin

Taking on the close-held myth that creativity is in-born, Colvin used research-based reasoning to prove that talent is the product of deliberate practice, not innate ability. His message has cut through the noise and his book, *Talent is Overrated* (2010), is both engaging and credible. It is the basis of my thinking tip on Mozart.

Google Scholar Results=5,010 Citations=1,363

YouTube Results=75 Clicks=34,665

Ken Robinson

Sir Ken has broken through with his humorous TedTalk, which has made the rounds on youtube.com with more than 3 million hits (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9CE55wbtY>). His RSA animated talk, discussing schools and creativity, has nearly 7 million hits (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcdGpL4U>). Obviously Ken has the secret sauce to reaching a broad public. I'll be analyzing all aspects of these two keynotes in minute detail.

Google Scholar Results=123,000 Citations=729

YouTube Results=3,840 Clicks=11,898,389

Daniel Pink

The first to really use RSA animation to arrest our attention (<http://youtu.be/u6XAPnuFjJc>). His content is not particularly novel, but his visual vehicle for transmitting it was astounding.

Google Scholar Results=98,800 Citations=1,395

YouTube Results=8,090 Clicks=9,706,158

As is evidenced by the crazy disparities in “ratings,” the web has its own rules and my earnest attempt to understand and play by them will, no doubt result in some humbling moments. But at least I’m on the playing field.

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Section Three: Process Plan

How I Plan to Achieve My Goals and Outcomes

The goal of this project is to launch a video series of “2-minute thinking tips.” They are made to move through social media channels. They are intended to be extraordinary enough to go viral. Research suggests that it takes 10,000 hours or 10 years to move one’s talent from ordinary to extraordinary (Colvin, 2010). I’m only supposed to devote 100 hours to this project. Happily, I have already banked thousands of hours crafting my writing skills (as a professional freelance writer) and thousands more studying graphic design (as a freelance designer). Thanks to my partnership with innovation expert Blair Miller, I’ve spent the last fifteen years studying and creating training materials around the science of creativity. So, when it comes to information packaging in the field of creativity, I’ve squarely hit my 10,000 hours. But there are two obvious things I lack in the mix: The first is expertise in public speaking. I’ve done some. I’ve enjoyed it, and received very positive feedback. The second is an understanding of what makes something catch popular attention. Both missing pieces will require an intensive process of learning and deliberate practice. I have therefore set out to do the following:

- attend Dale Carnegie Public Speaking Mastery class to polish up my speaking skills
- work with a sales coach to learn to speak the language of “benefits” and “value to you”
- watch the 20 most viewed TedTalks to understand how great talks are made & delivered
- draft 20 thinking tips to practice, practice, practice
- self-record 10 favorite tips
- solicit initial feedback from experts (Dorte, Doug, Margie, Russ)
- incorporate their feedback and record 3 thinking tips with a professional videographer

- post these initial takes on the FourSight youtube.com channel
- ask a broader audience to rate them on a 5-point scale and vote with a “like” or “share”
- show these “version 1” tips to film and video professionals (Charlie, Liz, Al)
- incorporate their feedback before professionally recording 2-5 additional thinking tips
- take the final tips into editing (add music, graphics)
- post all videos to the FourSight website for public viewing
- devise a “share the tip” campaign (with Russ, Charlie, Al, et. al.)
- count clicks to evaluate which tips “work” best
- capture learnings and to plan for future “version 2” tips

My first team of feedback givers will be Dorte Nielsen, who has a background in advertising, Doug Haight, who has a background in videography, Russ Schoen, who is a professor in creativity, and Margie Newman, a professional presentation coach. I will incorporate their feedback from my “draft” videos into the production of the first series (version 1) of professionally shot “Two-minute Thinking Tips.”

Doug Haight will shoot the first set of tips. We will post these, unedited, to the FourSight youtube.com channel, and ask a broad collection of friends, including colleagues and classmates, to “vote” by clicking “like” on the tips they like and “share” on the tips they like enough to share with others.

In addition to this “gut” level feedback from friends, I will also solicit detailed feedback from professionals in video, television and film. These include Liz Reeves, who does documentary film for public television, Al Williams, who works for Oprah, and Charlie Stone, a video producer who developed a “Tip Vision” video platform that has amassed over 100,000 hits. Their feedback will influence the final round of professional tips I shoot with Doug.

My aim is to shoot 5-8 finished tips by the end of March. In early April, I'll edit them into polished clips. Along the way I will construct a marketing plan to "release" the thinking tips in a way that can garner attention and gain momentum.

I believe the combination of observing great work (TED Talks), deliberately practicing to create one speech after another (dozens of 2-minute thinking tips drafts), and getting formal and informal feedback to constantly improve and upgrade the product will speed me up the learning curve I have to climb to become an extraordinary speaker. I'll also make a deliberate study of social media — primarily youtube.com — to better understand how that video series can captivate and spread to a larger audience.

January

Journaling ongoing (beginning Jan 6, 2012)

Reading research to collect story ideas ongoing

Apply to deliver an expo at the European Creative Problem Solving Conference (CREA)

Coaching, counseling ongoing (personal and sales)

Attend Dale Carnegie course on public speaking (2 day) Jan 30-31

Mentor relationship around "voice" with marketing guru Lawrence Niesler

Conversations about the masters project with Dorte, Sue, Blair, Russ, Stavros

Experiment with social media: Facebook, LinkedIn group forums, Twitter

Concept and write a series of draft tips to refine voice

February

Journaling, coaching, counseling ongoing

Reading research to collect story ideas ongoing

Study TED talks (Ken Robinson, Jane Goodall, Daniel Pink)

Collect images of female role models (i.e. newscasters, interviewers, etc.)

Refresh FS newsletter and voice with Russ

Update resume, bio & get professional headshot

Conversations with Dorte, Russ, Doug, Margie

Interview on a radioblog about creativity and innovation for the Corporate Learning Institute

Begin to produce 2-minute videos (goal for Feb: 10 rough drafts)

Professionally shoot first three video tips

March

Journaling, coaching, counseling ongoing

Reading research to collect story ideas ongoing

Study more TED talks (Nancy Duarte, Daniel Pink, 20 most viewed)

Collect feedback from first team of feedback givers

Incorporate feedback into final drafts

Professionally shoot 2-5 additional Thinking Tips

Develop a mentor relationship re: marketing with retired executive Gene Murtha

April

Edit final thinking tips and post to FourSight's YouTube channel

Develop a social media strategy for launching the Thinking Tips

Run the Expo at CREA April 22 and get feedback

Integrate feedback into my key learnings

Record and document for Chapter 4

Compile Chapter 5 and complete Project Paper

May

Submission

Rounds 1&2 of Edits/corrections

Deliver findings at CEE (post project): “How to Make Creativity Go Viral”

Time estimation	Hours
Working on Concept Paper	25
Shaping the overall concept	8
Formal training in speaking	22
Concept development, researching, writing and recording a series of 15 draft “thinking tip” videos	95
Documenting the learning process of “finding my voice”	25
Shooting “final” versions of 10 video tips	25
Incorporating feedback to improve my speeches & videos	21
Writing my final paper	25
Feedback	12
Finalizing project	8
Presentation	9
Total	275

Section Four: Outcomes

The Five Tips

On March 25, thanks to the help of dozens of talented, creative professionals, I uploaded my first “Two-minute Thinking Tip” to the FourSight channel on Youtube.com (Figure 1). By March 31, all five tips were up. In less than a week, they had garnered an impressive 328 clicks — only 999,672 clicks shy of a million.







<input type="checkbox"/> + Add to ▾		<input type="checkbox"/> Actions ▾	View: Newest ▾	Search uploads <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Q"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		The "Smart" Response to New Ideas...(hin... HD March 30, 2012 12:41 PM <input type="button" value="Edit"/> ▾	<input type="button" value="User"/>	54 2 0 0	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Business vs. Busy-ness: The demise of K... HD March 30, 2012 12:30 PM <input type="button" value="Edit"/> ▾	<input type="button" value="User"/>	11 1 0 1	
<input type="checkbox"/>		The Nose on your Face: The value of cog... HD March 30, 2012 12:20 PM <input type="button" value="Edit"/> ▾	<input type="button" value="User"/>	18 0 0 0	
<input type="checkbox"/>		What makes a Mozart? Secrets of extraor... March 29, 2012 9:46 AM <input type="button" value="Edit"/> ▾	<input type="button" value="User"/>	55 3 0 0	
<input type="checkbox"/>		What makes a Mozart? Secrets of extraor... March 28, 2012 8:49 PM <input type="button" value="Edit"/> ▾	<input type="button" value="User"/>	46 4 0 1	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Brainstorming doesn't work ...or does It? March 25, 2012 5:14 PM <input type="button" value="Edit"/> ▾	<input type="button" value="User"/>	144 1 0 2	

Figure 1. The FourSightOnline channel on March 31

Each tip describes one tiny facet of creative thinking. (See links to tips, Appendix B.) Some were tools, insights or research findings. My choice of topics was not methodical. I saw this project as a prototype exercise, designed to inform and educate me about what works and how it works. I didn't want to tackle the most important topics first.

So, I chose topics intuitively. I struck moments of inspiration and wrote from there. The writing came more easily and felt more authentic, as if I were channeling a message, not forcing it. It's amazing how much — and how little — fits into a two-minute video. (See sample script, Appendix C.) In essence, I could communicate one idea with an abstract, concrete and specific example. Add one personal take-away, and two minutes was up (Table 1).

Table 1. Tips titles, subtitles and topics

<i>Title</i>	<i>Subtitle</i>	<i>Topic</i>
<i>Brainstorming Doesn't Work...Or Does It?</i>	<i>Brainstorming is getting hammered in the press. Should you throw it out of your innovation toolbox? \$14 million dollars says you keep it.</i>	Tip: Don't turn your back on brainstorming just because it's suddenly "out of vogue."
<i>Business vs. Busy-ness: The Demise of Kodak</i>	<i>How did Kodak, the brand that captured all of our childhood memories, go bankrupt? By making the mistake that even smart, successful people often make.</i>	Tip: Be clear on the difference between what keeps you busy and what value you're really adding to others.
<i>The Nose on Your Face: The Value of Cognitive Assessments</i>	<i>What's the point of taking assessments like MBTI, DiSC or FourSight? The answer's as plain as the nose on your face.</i>	Tip: Assessments can show you information that is otherwise too close to see.
<i>What Makes a Mozart: Secrets of Extraordinary Performance</i>	<i>The 3 key ingredients that take you from ordinary to extraordinary performance.</i>	Tip: It takes years of deliberate practice to become "a creative genius."
<i>The "Smart" Response to New Ideas... (Hint: It's Not Criticism)</i>	<i>Want to raise your IQ 10 points in 2 minutes? Try this tip for responding to new ideas.</i>	Tip: When responding to a new idea, use the tool Praise First.

Feedback

I send the links out via Facebook and email to friends, neighbors, colleagues and classmates (Appendix D). Feedback from that crowd was uniformly positive and generous:

"These are awesome!! Love it! Brilliant, fun, engaging..."
 "Really--it is professional and clear and really good."
 "Your videos look amazing by the way! I keep finding new ones to watch!"
 "Fabulous production values!"
 "Brava! Love the video. You're a natural."
 "Whooo hooo! Wonderful. I'm so impressed."

Now that I think of it, I did send them all the "Praise First" tip.

The more substantive, critical feedback, which I incorporated into these published tips, came earlier from a handful of friends, coaches and experts who reviewed the initial drafts I shot on my own MacBook Pro computer using Photo Booth. I thought the drafts were pretty good—good enough to publish. The experts nudged me to upgrade. See their specific feedback in Section 5. The before and after images of the tip "Brainstorming Doesn't Work... Or Does It?" below are a testament to the quality and impact of their feedback (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Before and after feedback

The Viral Diary — Finding My Voice, Among Other Things

The journey to find my voice took me to some unexpected places. It turns out that my voice, when I finally found it, was tied up in stories around my family of origin. Even once untied, I had trouble coaxing it to speak up. Here's that story.

I grew up in a family of professionals. They frowned on sales. They valued eloquence and literary expression. They valued education and communication. Sales? Not so much. Sales was pushy, tacky and self-interested. Yet, as the new managing partner of the FourSight publishing house, I was supposed to sell products and shout the message about creativity. I had the horsepower to do it—but not the permission.

I was further tongue-tied by the fact that I'm married to the guy who used to run FourSight. For years, I've been "the wife" not "the voice" of the company. It took several sessions with professional sales coach, Diane Testa, to untangle my sales voice from the stories of my youth. It took several months and a whole different set of careful conversations, respectful experiments and small, consistent, mutual wins to gain confidence in my new voice.



Sarah Thurber
Biography

A leader in innovation and creativity, Sarah Thurber is the Managing Partner at FourSight, LLC, a publishing firm that specializes in developing research-based tools to enhance team performance.

For the last 10 years, Sarah has worked in partnership with academic researchers and top innovation consultants to develop *FourSight: Your Thinking Profile* along with a range of other online and print-based training tools that support cognitive diversity and creative problem solving. FourSight tools have served as a platform for promoting innovation for clients like Nike, Disney, HP, IBM, Kraft, Prudential, L'Oreal, the BBC and the Canadian Government. Thanks to Sarah's leadership, and the rigorous application of FourSight tools and principles, the FourSight company itself has doubled in size in the last two years.

Sarah first encountered the world of creative studies, as President of THinc Communications when she agreed to edit and publish the training manual *Creativity Unbound—An Introduction to Creative Process*. Now in its 5th edition, has been translated into Spanish, French and Japanese and Sarah is officially a coauthor.

In 2011, she was instrumental in spearheading the publication of the Jossey-Bass book, *The Innovative Team*, a FourSight business fable by authors Chris Grivas and Gerard Puccio. In 2012, she developed *Your 2-Minute Thinking Tip* video series for FourSight as part of her graduate work at the International Center for Studies in Creativity.

After a career that took her on assignment throughout the U.S., Europe, Asia and Africa, Sarah is happy to settle in Chicago and help her FourSight clients tap two inexhaustible sources of energy: innovation and creativity.

Figure 3. The new public image (See larger version in Appendix H.)

In the end, we all won. And ironically, though not surprisingly, Blair became the project's greatest cheerleader. My parents are its biggest fans. Perhaps the real creative achievement of "The Million-click Thinking Tip" was overcoming my own self-imposed limitations around "voice" as evidenced by my new professional "biography and headshot" (Figure 4). It's the headshot and bio of Sarah Thurber, Managing Partner of FourSight, LLC, innovation expert and public speaker.

The journal, which I kept throughout the project, reveals that while some moments found me bursting with confidence, not all moments did. (See journal entry, Figure 4.)

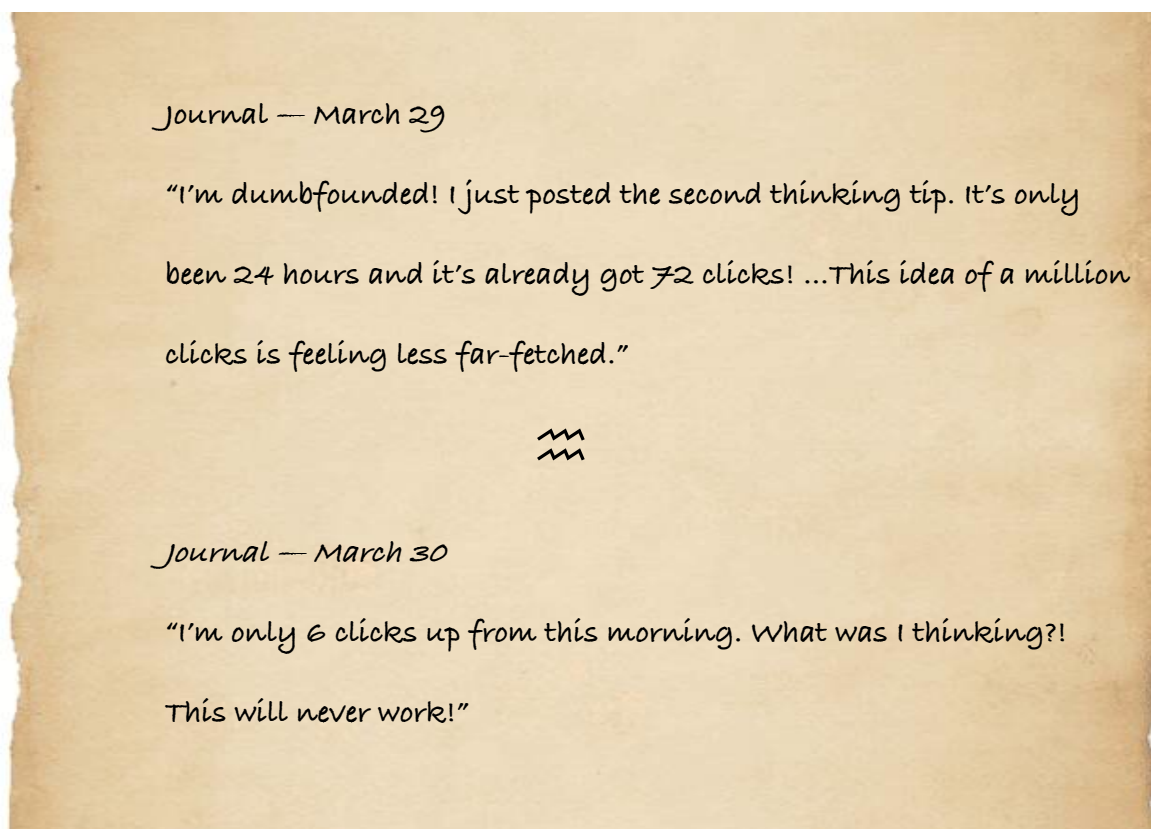


Figure 4. Journal entries, March 29 & 30

In Search of Search Engines

Of course getting the tips made was only half the battle. Getting them seen was the other half. And so commenced my crusade for clicks—a million clicks (Appendices F&G). I set out to practice the meticulous art of search engine optimization, taught to me by friends who are video producers and web experts. For each tip, I constructed a slightly different search strategy. I kept a record of when each tip was launched, where it was distributed and how it was optimized for search (Table2).

Table 2
SEO Strategies

Video	Built on	Post Date	Strategies	Worked	Didn't work	Next time	Clicks Mar 31	Clicks Apr 28
Brainstorming doesn't work or does it?	Brainshark	25-Mar	Built in Brainshark to embed text, posted in FS newsletter, blog, & FB, LI, sent to Supremes	Enthusiasm of being the first one	Not published in HD. Sound.	Use pro mic on the title frame sound	144	251
What makes a Mozart?	Brainshark	28-Mar	Used Google insights to find "Extraordinary Performance" title, posted on my own facebook page with plea to "click" and "share". Used the black title page, rather than my image.	jewel tone shirt! Broader appeal of message. Keyword: Mozart	Over 2 min. still stiff in my performance.	loosen up. Get more expressive, more personal. From the heart	55	105
What makes a Mozart? ALTERNATE	Brainshark	29-Mar	Added music to the front end and tested to see if the "talking head" image would get more clicks than the "word title" image	Music was clever. Also creating a duplicate video doubled the click rate	Needed matching music at the end	go for the "sandwich" effect for front and back	46	64
The Nose on your Face	Final Cut	30-Mar	Supreme email. ICSC faculty. Friends, Neighborhood email list. Launched paid ad campaign April 25.	This was the first one I actually recorded.	I was nervous. Eye contact wandered off lens.	Practice speech looking at a piece of tape on the wall	18	272
Business v. Busy-ness	Final Cut	30-Mar	Supreme email. ICSC faculty. Friends, Neighborhood email list.	Introduced the idea of a real-time exercise	Not tied to creativity or innovation	ask people to pause the video to do tip	11	77
"Smart" response to new ideas	Final Cut	30-Mar	Supreme email. ICSC faculty. ICSC Twitter. Personal FB x2. Personal emails to friends, neighbors, colleagues. Published in N&I newsletter April 26.	Good sound. Great tool. This performance felt the freest	Wish I had a way to credit tool and offer more info	Figure out a "credits" page	54	452
Total clicks after 34 days							328	1221

(Note: See larger version in Appendix F.)

Section Five: Key Learnings

The Secret to Extraordinary Performance (Reprise)

It turns out that Geoff Colvin was right. He's the author of *Talent is Overrated*, the book that served as fodder for my two-minute thinking tip on "What Makes a Mozart?" He claims that the three secret ingredients to improving performance are: 1) a tough coach, 2) lots of practice and 3) "deliberate" practice.

I was determined to improve my performance as a public speaker. Colvin's book, which I read in January, became my own recipe for success: 1) Get coaches — I would get coaching in all the areas outside my area of expertise. 2) Get practice — I would figure out a way to practice a lot by creating, not one long speech, but a whole series of short speeches. 3) Get deliberate practice — I would work hard on the hard parts, the stuff that didn't come easily.

I began the project with lots of energy and lots of questions:

- What's the essence of my public speaking project?
- What medium would carry it?
- How to give a great speech?
- How to make a world-class product?
- How to sell things without being icky?
- How to create a professional looking video series?
- How to look good on video?
- How to get a million clicks?
- How to apply search engine optimization techniques?

- How to build credibility as a speaker?
- How to make it authentic?
- How to make a cool video that's cheap and fast?
- How to package the tips as a branded series?

My “Tough Coaches”

To answer all those questions, I drew upon the expertise of everyone I could think of. I begged, cajoled, coaxed or, in a few cases, simply hired professionals to help. I list them here by timeline and share a few key learnings that forwarded the project.

Sue Keller-Mather, *professor and Master's Project advisor ICSC, January 12*

What's the essence of my public speaking project? Sue saw through the clutter of all my ideas and isolated the true value of this project: Finding my voice. That remained the North Star of this project.

Lawrence Niesler, *president of a marketing group, January 25*

What media would carry it? Lawrence looked at an early prototype video, shot from my own computer. He didn't laugh. In fact, he encouraged me to produce a series of similar short video clips as a marketing tool for FourSight.

Kathy Ewald, *trainer at Dale Carnegie, Chicago, January 30-31*

How to give a great speech? Kathy led a two-day intensive Dale Carnegie workshop that included tips, templates and techniques for public speaking. The advice was clear, plain and

bombproof. She took videos of each of us speaking and required us to review them. I learned from seeing myself on video in a bunchy brown sweater. I also learned how quickly each of us progressed. I saw that you can get better fast!

Dorte Nielsen, *Supreme sounding board partner, ex-ad agency creative director, creative communications professor, author*

How to make a world-class product? Dorte helped raise the bar throughout: She helped pinpoint the perfect project, looked at early homemade prototypes, taught me that everything in the video frame was communicating to the audience, advocated for creative tip titles, and urged me to “woo” the camera rather than look off-screen.

Diane Testa, *professional sales coach, Jan 13, 27, Feb 10, 23*

How to sell things without being icky? Diane taught me that “good sales” is mostly good communication — understanding what the other guy needs and articulating what you’ve got to help out.

Doug Haight, *professional videographer, Fortune Fish Films, Feb 15, 29, Mar 28*

How to shoot a professional looking video series? Doug gently moved me off the idea that I could shoot these videos at home on my own computer, arguing that a professional audience needs a professional video. He volunteered to shoot the tips at our office and showed me how to create a frame that would become the “signature” of the tips. I learned a thousand things from Doug, who patiently and methodically combed every detail of these videos.

Margie Newman, *professional presentation consultant, Feb 27*

How to look good on video? Margie, who coaches CEOs and executives on presentation skills, was like the fairy godmother of this project. She taught me the basics on: voice inflection, jewel-tone clothing, makeup, sentence structure, background frame, jewelry accessories, physical animation, tightening content, and being “big” on screen. I just wrote down everything she said and did it.

Charlie Stone, *partner, ad agency, Mar 11*

How to get a million clicks? Charlie tackled the small matter of how to get 1,000,000 people to actually view these tips. His own video tip series now circulates to 5 million viewers a month. He talked about how the tips were syndicated and distributed and introduced me to the black art of search engine technology.

Blair Miller, *husband, innovation expert, ongoing*

How to apply search engine optimization techniques? While Blair was sage enough to remain a cheerleader throughout the project, he did intervene as a coach on the subject of search engine optimization. His insights on specific ways to link titles, content and website were influential in how I constructed several of the tips.

Clay Cerny, *professional resume and biography writer, Feb 28, Mar 5*

How to build credibility as a speaker? Clay helped me construct my new identity on paper—in the form of a resume and biography. I watched him extract threads of information and weave

them into a coherent, professional profile. Interestingly, he left my “mom” identity out entirely but turned me into a creativity and innovation expert.

Andrea Gaines, *personal coach, ongoing*

How to make it authentic? Andrea’s feedback on the initial videos was very positive. She knows that I tend to live in my head. She encouraged me to come through with a bit more heart and personality, which I think is reflected in the last two videos I shot.

Russ Schoen, *FourSight colleague, professor at ICSC, ongoing*

How to make a cool video that’s cheap and fast? Russ brought the idea of using the online “Brainshark.com” video building tool. It allowed me to make a video (not one of the tips) in 48 hours at no cost. I ended up using the Brainshark.com technology in a few of the tips to embed text that can make the video more searchable on Google.

Peter Zapf, *principle in ad agency, designer and copywriter, Mar 29*

How to package the tips as a branded series? Peter looked at the series on our FourSightOnline Youtube.com channel and suggested grouping them, in the future, by tip, technique, theory, etc. More thinking will have to go into this concept.

Clearly, I had much to learn from this project. Happily, I learned much. Nearly all of it I applied to the tips themselves. Given my high FourSight preference for ideating and implementing, the project’s intensive demands to “learn it fast” and “apply it faster” were a perfect fit for me.

Practice! Practice! Practice!

A number of people, after viewing the clips, asked if I was reading off notes. No notes. Each speech was memorized. It was the only way I could tighten down the timing and deliver on my “2-minute” promise. Memorizing took some practice. I would record myself over and over on “Photo Booth.” In fact, my MacBook Pro’s memory was jammed so tight with movie files, I had to spend time every other week deleting all the practice runs.

But all the practice on the speeches didn’t prepare me for the shoot. There were so many different things to keep in mind. Eye contact with the lens, not drifting to the right, not tripping up on words or stammering, managing my hair and makeup and clothes, getting used to the lights and the mic and trying not to pay attention to the ambient noise. Between buses driving by, phones ringing, sunlight changing and me screwing up, each tip required 5 to 10 takes before we knew we had a keeper.

Deliberate Practice

After the first round of shooting, which took place in late February, I realized that I needed to practice, not only with my voice, but also with my body. I started rehearsing speeches looking directly at a piece of masking tape on the wall. I held on to a chair to be sure my shoulders didn’t drift. I learned new makeup techniques and practiced so that I could do it effortlessly on the next shoot day. All that paid off. The second shoot was far easier than the first. I could focus more on the script and on my connection to the audience through the camera.

Section Six: Conclusion

“Chinese Proof”

Journal — March 22

When I was in college, I decided to take Chinese. It was the end of my sophomore year and I was having a crisis of confidence. After two years at a fancy liberal arts institution, HAD I REALLY LEARNED ANYTHING?

Frankly, I wasn't sure. So I embarked on the study of Chinese, in part, because I was absolutely sure I didn't know it. One year later, I found myself traveling solo in Mainland China chatting, albeit haltingly, with the natives. I had learned enough Chinese to do the job. I had proof. I had really learned something new.

A bit of that same insecurity has plagued me with this Master's Project. Am I really learning how to express myself as a public speaker? Am I getting to be a plausible “expert” in the field of creativity? Wasn't I already pretty good standing up in front of a crowd? Is this really going to help me broadcast my message?

This week—three months into the project—I got what I call “Chinese proof.” A FourSight order came through the Internet from the head of organizational development at Leo Burnett, one of the largest ad agencies in Chicago. I thought, “This client is a perfect match for our new ‘Team Report’ product.” I emailed and she wrote back: “Sounds interesting. Send any info you've got.”

Gulp. At that moment, I realized that I have no “info” on that product. I have nothing but a tortured write-up in our web store, because we still haven't figured out how to talk about that product. It's too complicated. Then I thought of my Master's Project, and I thought about the new Brainshark.com technology that Russ has been talking about.

That afternoon I started writing a speech—a script about the FourSight Team Report and what it does. I stayed up until 2am that night putting together a slide show, learning the Brainshark.com cloudware, and laying down an audio track. The next night I was up late again, editing and improving the clip.

Less than 48 hours after her request, I emailed the executive at Leo Burnett a link to a 3.5-minute speech I had put together. It's safe to say, this project is working!”

Figure 5. Journal entry, March 22

Did It Work?

The 3.5-minute video described in my journal entry gave me tangible evidence — “Chinese proof” — that knowledge I internalized in the course of this project has truly helped me: 1) find my voice, 2) express it in a public speech and 3) broadcast it through social media — quickly (Figure 7). It’s worth noting that, two weeks after it was uploaded to Youtube.com, the Team Report video has amassed 660 views. In fact, when I type “innovative team” in the Youtube.com search, my Team Report video is the first non-ad video on the screen. It appears directly under the video of my social media idol Jeremy Gutsche’s *paid* ad (“#1 Innovation Keynote,” which has now amassed a whopping 183,697 clicks). It’s worth noting that Jeremy’s keynote has been there since October, 10, 2010. I’ve got 75 weeks to best him (Figure 6).

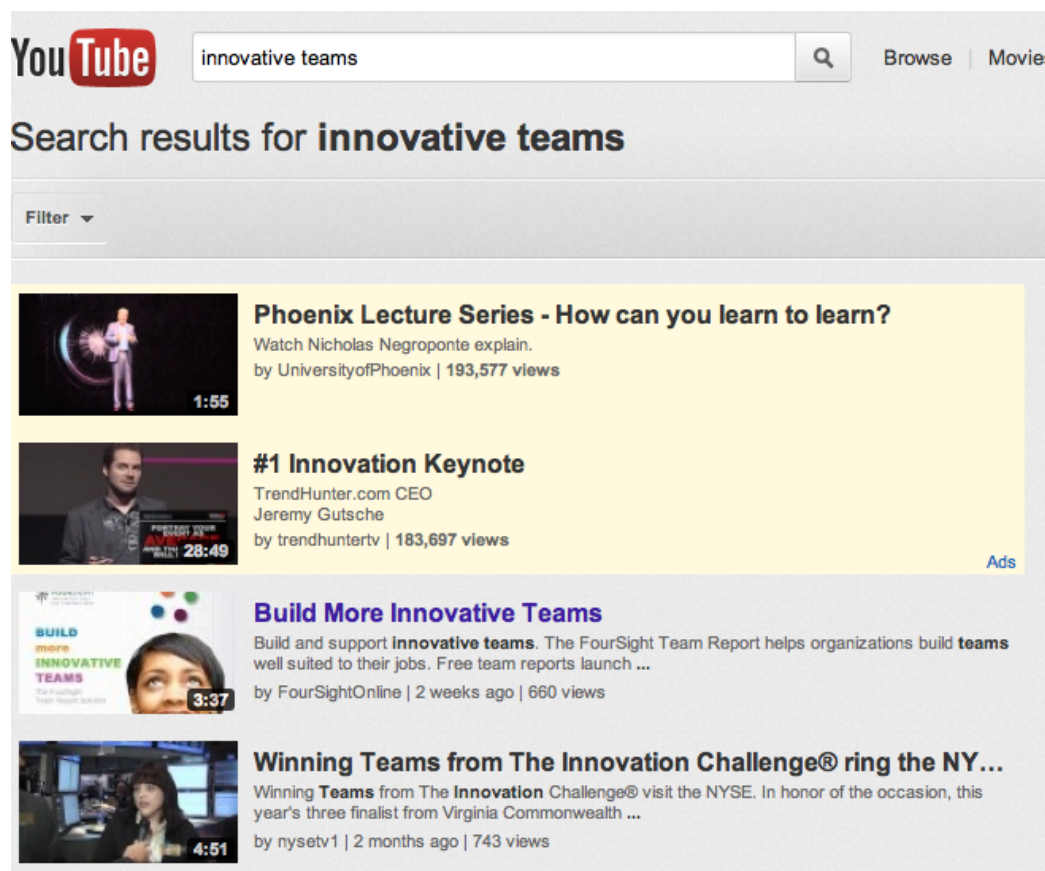


Figure 6. Results for “Innovative Teams” in Youtube search

The Million-lessons Learned Project

Indeed, while my click rate currently falls far short of a million, “The Million-click Thinking Tip” project has exceeded my expectations at almost every other level. From beginning to end of the project, I had the pleasure of working with extremely bright, talented, creative people. Each part of the process was what you might call “hard fun,” meaning that it was hard work—work outside my comfort zone—and fun to achieve. Finding my voice took equal parts courage and encouragement. Making the video tips was easy when it came to writing, but challenging at first when it came to performing. Finally, learning to game the search engine system has been, and will continue to be, a great education in social media, which is like a foreign language to those of use who got our training in print media.

Going forward I can see incorporating these tips into a regular FourSight product that helps FourSight market what we do and broadcast what we’re “about.” I can imagine us building categories of tips that include tools, sales, techniques and theories and branding each category in a slightly different way. I can imagine getting these tips syndicated on other media distribution networks.

This project is still miles away from delivering on the content goal of OSA, but I can see some of the pieces falling into the mosaic in tips like “The ‘Smart’ Response to New Ideas.” As I get more comfortable with this medium, I will plan and implement my cardinal rules of creativity curriculum. That lies ahead, as does the creation of a integrated marketing plan that allows FourSight to roll these tips out in a smart, measured way that helps us gather a larger following and reaches an ever larger audience.

Keep Clicking

I have loved and deeply appreciated the journey of this project. And the product itself is something that I am proud of, will build on, and will consider the great achievement of my graduate work (Figure 7).



















	The "Smart" Response to New Ideas...(hi... HD March 30, 2012 12:41 PM		442 7 0
			
	Business vs. Busy-ness: The demise of K... HD March 30, 2012 12:30 PM		76 4 0
			
	The Nose on your Face: The value of cog... HD March 30, 2012 12:20 PM		185 1 0
			
	What makes a Mozart? Secrets of extraor... March 29, 2012 9:46 AM		105 4 0
			
	What makes a Mozart? Secrets of extraor... March 28, 2012 8:49 PM		64 4 0
			
	Brainstorming doesn't work ...or does it? March 25, 2012 5:14 PM		249 1 0
			

Figure 7. The FourSightonline channel on April 28, 2012

Someday we'll cross the mark of a million clicks—all the while, sewing the seeds of OSA. By that time, it will just be another day on the exciting journey we've begun. I'm looking forward to the adventures ahead. Keep clicking!

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Concept Paper

Appendix A

Concept Paper — CRS 690

The Million-Click Thinking Tip

by Sarah Thurber

Submitted February 5, 2012

to Professor Sue Keller-Mathers

The International Center for Studies in Creativity

Buffalo State College

Project Type: To develop public speaking skills and social media savvy to produce a series of two-minute “thinking tip” video blogs that could ultimately go viral, while cultivating the authentic voice to deliver them.

Appendix A

Section One

Purpose and Description of Project

Epiphany

Back in June 2011, I sat at the little desk in my linoleum-tiled dorm room at Buffalo State College and had an epiphany. I wrote it on a post it note and stuck it on the desk. It said simply: **OSΔ**. The O and S stood for “operating system.” The little triangle (which is the Greek letter for “delta”) means change. “**OSΔ**” was my newly devised shorthand to describe an operating system to deal with constant change.

A second year graduate student at the International Center for Studies in Creativity, I suddenly realized that’s what my graduate studies were all about. I was getting a “brain upgrade” to my mental operating system. The professors variously referred to it as “creativity,” “innovation,” “change leadership” or “creative problem solving.” Call it what you will. What I was learning was **OSΔ** — an operating system to deal with constant change.

It’s a good thing, because constant change is what we’ve got. Hundreds of years from now, scholars will reflect on the turn of this millennium as a pivotal point in human history. It’s when the Internet sprang to life. As a historical event, it ranks along with the discovery of agriculture (which took a lot longer than a decade to roll out), the Guttenberg press (whose impact was slowed by massive illiteracy, but eventually resulted in the Reformation and the Age of Enlightenment), and the Industrial Age (which prompted the creation of an entire public education system), (Freidman, 2005).

Appendix A

All of these events were marked with the same fundamental distinction – they created the possibility, and ultimately the demand, for *much* greater information exchange. In the case of agriculture, people could make permanent settlements and spend time thinking, not scavenging for food. In the case of the printing press, books no longer had to be hand lettered, so books, and therefore reading, became more prevalent. In the case of the Industrial Revolution required a massive education effort to staff the enterprise. But when it comes to information, the Internet Age has more of everything: speed, breadth and volume.

With the advent of the Internet, never before has so much information been accessible so quickly to so many. The result? Power structures have overturned in Egypt, Syria, Libya and Burma. Twitter and Facebook have kicked up a cultural revolution in the Middle East (Goodman, 2011). The massive spread of information is changing the way humans are organizing themselves. It bears out the prediction that Margaret Wheatley makes in her 1992 book *Leadership and the New Science* where she says the influx of new information prompts change, causing groups to self-organize in new ways to accommodate the new reality. New information results in growth, change and evolutionary adaptation.

Like in any disruption, there are those clever enough to adapt (innovators), there are those frightened enough to retrench (fundamentalists), and then there are the rest of us, who are waiting for things to get back to normal (Gutsche, 2009).

But change is the new black. It *is* the new normal. It's going to be with us for a while.

Appendix A

Up a Creek Without a Process

Little was built into our education system to teach us to respond to such an era of rapid change. We inherited educational systems that served factory workers and industrialists (Robinson, 2011) Most of us are trying to apply an education filled with right answers to a world teeming with open-ended questions. In my own corner of the world, I see moms, kids, dads, grandparents, teachers and neighbors struggling to sort this out. I also see a distinct gap between what most people know and what they need to know about effective thinking. We don't need answers. The answers change too fast. We need processes for discovery, creation and insight. We need an upgrade to our mental operating system. We need **OSA**.

For decades, the International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) and other creativity organizations have offered some interesting, alternative views of how to solve problems and facilitate smart, flexible, original thinking (Puccio, 2010). The formal study of creativity offers us some new answers, which collectively function like an operating system for change —**OSA**. These insights have the potential to help us all look good in the little black dress of change.

Rationale for Selection: Check your Insights at the Door

Sorry, We're Looking for Something Simpler

But the message in its current packaging is too complex. The bouncer at the popular press door is looking for something a little younger and a little sexier. The deliberate, research-based, process-bound insights from ICSC are not making headlines

Appendix A

(Puccio, 2012). Quite the contrary, in some areas of the popular press, the Center is actively maligned, misunderstood and diminished (Lehrer, 2012).

Why isn't ICSC's world-class information and inquiry into the field of creativity reaching a worldwide audience? How might we correct that? I'm up for that investigation. As I see it, the job has two parts. First, to make a deliberate study of: What voices break through? What media support that? What theories grab hold? What speakers go viral? (i.e. what's sexy and/or cool enough to get past the popular press bouncers?) Second, to figure out how might I package this information in a way that will help it break through, grab hold and go viral. It's comically overambitious. Just my cup of tea.

Cardinal Rules of Creativity

Then there's the little matter of content. Exactly what would you communicate to a popular audience, if you could? What are the "cardinal rules" of creativity, or the "key OSA takeaways?" Below are a few of the that I would like to see enter everyday parlance:

- Everyone is creative
- Creativity takes effort
- Deliberate creativity works
- Take turns diverging and converging
- Learn the 4-step Creative Process (FourSight model)
- Enhance your thinking ability with tools and exercises
- Manage your thinking preferences, or they'll manage you

I see myself giving voice to those insights with a combination of good, old-fashioned storytelling and fun, fast technology. I intend to cultivate a voice that breaks

Appendix A

through the noise and offers people insights and tools from the field of creativity that let them transform their experience and give them the power to make their own change.

My aim is to create a vehicle that can broadcast these ideas—widely. What better vehicle than the Internet, the very thing that precipitated all this change in the first place. Yesterday’s soapbox has given way to today’s blog. Twitter feeds and Facebook pages take messages “viral” on the web. I’ve called my project “The Million-click Thinking Tip” because my aim is to take the cardinal rules of creativity and integrate them into a social media product that could go viral. The specific nature of the product, detailed more fully in Chapter 3, is to create a series of two-minute thinking tips (research-based, actionable insights), that will live on the web and, over time, collectively, tally over a million clicks.

For me, the project brings together five strands: 1) my early career as a professional writer, editor and information designer, 2) my current career as managing partner of the FourSight publishing company, a firm dedicated to producing world-class, research-based training materials in creativity and innovation, 3) my personal desire to share the power of creativity with an “everyday” audience, and 4) my fascination with what makes a voice extraordinary enough to break the surface, and 5) my desire to cultivate an extraordinary voice of my own.

I will dedicate the next three months to weaving those strands together and to figure out: How to make a product that connects to people so intensely and so personally that they simply have to share it? How can I cultivate an extraordinary voice?

Appendix A

Section Two

Sources & Influences

The intellectual mentors I have chosen for “The Million-click Thinking Tip” project are an eclectic mix of serious academic researchers and popular cultural influencers. I am keen to study not only the masters of content (i.e. academic researchers who have brought insights into the field of creative studies) but also the masters of popular spin (i.e. million-click wonders like Sir Ken Robinson and Daniel Pink who have brought some of those insights to the masses).

In the spirit of my project, I will resist the impulse to write a long, threaded narrative detailing the academic origins of this project. Rather, I will describe the people who most influenced my thinking in a series of social-media-sized write-ups, which include a mini-bio and two rating systems I devised that highlight their scholarly and popular influence.

The first rating — the “Google Scholar” rating — shows the number of results I found when searching each individual in Google Scholar. The “results” number is followed a “citations” number, which is the sum of all the citations in their top five most-cited articles.

The second rating — the “YouTube” rating — shows the magnitude of their presence on YouTube. The rating system, again, includes two numbers: The first is the number of “results” that appear when you type that person’s name into the YouTube search engine. The second is the sum of the click counts in their top ten most-viewed videos.

Appendix A

Meet My Key Influencers

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

I am just as interested in Professor Csikszentmihalyi's research as I am in how he managed to bring it to a mass audience. Father of the term "flow" — which essentially means the nexus of disciplined practice and creativity, he not only drew his theory from research, he also managed to penetrate the noise and reach people with his message. I've spoken to him personally about how he achieved this (a persistent literary agent) and will continue to read his books, particularly, *Good Business* (2003), *Finding Flow* (1998) and *The Evolving Self* (1994) to provide content for my "tips." I admire that even in his retirement, Csikszentmihalyi is actively seeking answers and committed to the creation of a new branch of psychology (positive psychology) that will forward the human experience.

Google Scholar Results=39,400. Citations=25,041

YouTube Results=228. Clicks=322,014

Jim Kouzes

In many ways, Jim Kouzes has done exactly what I hope to do in my role as managing partner of FourSight: He launched a research-based assessment, delivered his message to a worldwide audience, and remained true to his values as a transformational leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Kouzes and his partner Barry Posner not only created the Leadership Practices Inventory (1988), but also created the field of transformational leadership. Kouzes has generously mentored me in understanding the business path opportunities of the FourSight assessment and in understanding how we might better

Appendix A

broadcast the message behind it. When I attended the “Leadership Challenge” workshop in July 2011, I asked him to write an endorsement for our new FourSight book, *The Innovative Team*. He not only agreed, but read the book and wrote a glowing recommendation. Most importantly, he is a personal role model, because he really appears to “walk his talk.” He is the same person in person that he projects in his book *The Leadership Challenge* (2007). There’s a lot of integrity in that voice.

Google Scholar Results=4,970. Citations=6,685

YouTube Results=41. Clicks=66,927

Dale Carnegie

Carnegie is probably the best example of someone outside of a religious or spiritual order who packaged up a TON of psychological information (most of it, just plain good sense) and made an operating system out of it (1936). Carnegie put his insights into a form that others could find engaging and actionable. He created not only a phenomenal training forum, but also a public speaking mastery course, one I attended in January 2012 as part of this project (2012). I have read and reread his book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, not only for the content but also for an understanding of how he crafted his series of abstract concepts in such a down-to-earth, memorable way that they actually became “sticky.” Though he died in 1955, you can see that his pop culture rationings still soar.

Google Scholar Results=30,300. Citations=1,147

YouTube Results=2,610. Clicks=672,751

Appendix A

Daniel Kahneman

Kahneman is the current “thinking” guru on the best-seller list. Winner of the Nobel Prize for economics, Kahneman has recently published *Thinking Fast and Slow* (2011), which is a compendium of research on the broad subject of thinking. It includes studies from the behavioral sciences to the neurosciences. While it moves away from the specific focus on creativity, its insights are nonetheless hugely relevant and very credible for an intellectual, *New York Times*-reading cocktail-party crowd. There are good tips buried in those pages. Also, thanks to his notoriety as a Nobel Laureate, he’s got high social media ratings.

Google Scholar Results=26,100. Citations=58,301

YouTube Results=137. Clicks=270,084

Jeremy Gutche

When you type “Innovation Keynote” into the YouTube search engine, this is the guy you get (<http://youtu.be/P4gAkM72ah4>). His 28-minute keynote has topped 171,000 views. Gutche is “Mr. Flash” when it comes to Innovation presentations. He’s definitely got the younger generation’s approach to keynoting: It’s all about “edu-tainment.” Awesome graphics, gripping stories, big flash-and-wow examples with funny punch lines — he’s good. And he’s got more than just his charm. He used to be a corporate innovation executive. He talks about creative person, and product, and environment and process. It’s just so darn entertaining that you barely notice. His social media savvy have him using a more modern balance between graphics and text (i.e. more graphics). He has a book you can download free off the Internet (2009). It’s a good book. Of course, in

Appendix A

exchange for your “free” book, he gets to capture your email address and put you on his marketing list. So despite his youth, he really does have some business chops and good marketing instincts. He’s an interesting hybrid and a self-made social media presence.

Google Scholar Results=182 Citations=1

YouTube Results=179 Clicks=235,466

Margaret Wheatley

Brilliant. For me, Wheatley is perhaps the most compelling thinker on this list. Her book *Leadership and the New Science* (1992) changed my understanding of how the world works. It fundamentally shifted my thinking paradigm and was so poetically written that I felt grateful and awed by her willingness to share it with me. Not so much a “do-it-yourself” approach, but a highly abstract, theoretical work, almost Copernican in its impact for me. It changed the way I understood organizations: how to grow them and how to lead them. So while she’s not heavy on the prescriptive applied side, it’s one of the most influential books I’ve read.

Google Scholar Results=13,600 Citations=4,728

YouTube Results=85 Clicks=40,158

Abraham Maslow

Forefather of positive psychology, he coined the term “self-actualization” and promised it was something we could pursue as individuals or as organizations. *Maslow on Management* (1998) was the book that inspired Csikszentmihalyi’s book *Good*

Appendix A

Business (2003). His pioneering work into positive psychology laid the groundwork for researchers like Martin Seligman and Howard Gardiner follow. Maslow is weak on research, but in the vanguard of thinking. Like Csikszentmihalyi, he has also forged a path to a higher spiritual plain, not through religion, but through psychology.

Google Scholar Results=29,800 Citations=40,811

YouTube Results=1,510 Clicks=261,727

Robert Sternberg

Outstanding for his rigorous and long-term commitment to research in the field of creativity, Sternberg offers a great view of the field of creative studies from “the inside.” I plan to plumb his *Cambridge Handbook on Creativity* (2006) to use as the research base for a number of my “Two-Minute Thinking Tips.”

Google Scholar Results=51,000 Citations=7650

YouTube Results=19 Clicks=20,675

Eckart Tolle

A living spiritual teacher, Tolle has influence my thinking about “inner voice” tremendously. In *A New Earth* (2008), he makes the distinction between the “ego” voice and the inner voice. In developing my own voice to create and deliver a keynote, I am so grateful for that distinction. My goal is to channel that inner voice.

Google Scholar Results=2360 Citations=749

YouTube Results=13,600 Clicks=4,603,379

Appendix A

Martin Seligman

Leader of the positive psychology movement and author of *Authentic Happiness* (2002) Seligman is teaching the world to be happier, using research-based advice. That's a model that I respect and will imitate in my own work as I help people discover their own creativity.

Google Scholar Results=30,200 Citations=23,219

YouTube Results=366 Clicks=491,489

Gerard Puccio

Originator of the FourSight theory, Puccio has refreshed the field of creative problem solving with his Thinking Skills Model. His FourSight assessment has brought it into relevance in modern day business. His academic work on *Creative Leadership* (2010) and his more popular work on *The Innovative Team* (2011) are an important mix of voices for me.

Google Scholar Results=455 Citations=235

YouTube Results=39 Clicks=7,596

Alex Osborn

The granddaddy of Creative Problem Solving (1963) deserves a lot of credit for putting creativity on our radar and focusing hard enough on the concept to divine a process that could be described and repeated. Right now, he's coming in for some criticism as the debate on brainstorming heats up, but the creative process he described

Appendix A

starts before and ends after simple brainstorming. He continues to deserve our respect and appreciation.

Google Scholar Results=28,200 Citations=4,312

YouTube Results=3 Clicks=1,255

Jonah Lehrer

New author on the creativity scene, Lehrer is the “hot” writer of bestselling books on decision making and creativity (2012). His book *Imagine: How Creativity Works* hit the presses March 2012. Meanwhile, his controversial January article in *The New Yorker* puts brainstorming in the boxing ring, contesting that it is not the best method to come up with creative ideas. The debate is hot. This could be fun and draw the limelight to the field of creative studies.

Google Scholar Results=26,100 Citations=58,301

YouTube Results=137 Clicks=270,084

Geoff Colvin

Taking on the close-held myth that creativity is in-born, Colvin used research-based reasoning to prove that talent is the product of deliberate practice, not innate ability. His message has cut through the noise and his book, *Talent is Overrated* (2010), is both engaging and credible. It is the basis of my thinking tip on Mozart.

Google Scholar Results=5,010 Citations=1,363

YouTube Results=75 Clicks=34,665

Appendix A

Ken Robinson

Sir Ken has broken through with his humorous TedTalk which has made the rounds on youtube.com with more than 3 million hits (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9CE55wbtY>). His RSA animated talk, discussing schools and creativity, has nearly 7 million hits (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>). Obviously Ken has the secret sauce to reaching a broad public. I'll be analyzing all aspects of these two keynotes in minute detail.

Google Scholar Results=123,00 Citations=729

YouTube Results=3,840 Clicks=11,898,389

Daniel Pink

The first to really use RSA animation to arrest our attention (<http://youtu.be/u6XAPnuFjJc>). His content is not particularly novel, but his visual vehicle for transmitting it was astounding.

Google Scholar Results=98,800 Citations=1,395

YouTube Results=8,090 Clicks=9,706,158

This is my Pantheon of thinkers. As is evidenced by the crazy disparities in their Google Scholar vs. Youtube "ratings," the web has its own rules when it comes to valuing people's contributions. My own earnest attempts to understand and play by those rules will, no doubt, result in some humbling moments. But at least I'm playing.

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Appendix A

Section Three

How I Plan to Achieve My Goals and Outcomes

The goal of this project is to launch a video series of “2-minute thinking tips” that will move through social media channels and are extraordinary enough to go viral.

Research suggests that it takes 10,000 hours or 10 years to move one’s talent from ordinary to extraordinary (Colvin, 2010). I’m only supposed to devote 100 hours to this project. Happily, I have already banked thousands of hours crafting my writing skills (as a professional freelance writer) and thousands more studying graphic design (as a freelance designer). Thanks to my partnership with innovation expert Blair Miller, I’ve spent the last fifteen years studying and creating training materials around the science of creativity. So, when it comes to information packaging in the field of creativity, I’ve squarely hit my 10,000 hours. But there are two obvious things I lack in the mix: The first is expertise in public speaking. I’ve done some. I’ve enjoyed it, and received very positive feedback. The second is an understanding of what makes something catch popular attention. Both missing pieces will require an intensive process of learning and deliberate practice. I have therefore set out to do the following:

- attend Dale Carnegie Public Speaking Mastery class to polish up my speaking skills
- work with a sales coach to learn to speak the language of “benefits” and value to you”
- watch the 20 most viewed TedTalks to understand how great talks are made & delivered
- draft 20 thinking tips to practice, practice, practice
- self-record 10 favorite tips

Appendix A

- solicit initial feedback from experts (Dorte, Doug, Margie, Russ)
- incorporate their feedback and record 3 thinking tips with a professional videographer
- post these initial takes on the FourSight youtube.com channel
- ask a broader audience to rate them on a 5-point scale and vote with a “like” or “share”
- show these “version 1” tips to film and video professionals (Charlie, Liz, Al)
- incorporate their feedback before professionally recording 2-5 additional thinking tips
- take the final tips into editing (add music, graphics)
- post all videos to the FourSight website for public viewing
- devise a “share the tip” campaign (with Russ, Charlie, Al, et. al.)
- count clicks to evaluate which tips “work” best
- capture learnings and to plan for future “version 2” tips

My first team of feedback givers will be Dorte Nielsen, who has a background in advertising, Doug Haight, who has a background in videography, Russ Schoen, who is a professor in creativity, and Margie Newman, a professional presentation coach. I will incorporate their feedback from my “draft” videos into the production of the first series (version 1) of professionally shot “Two-minute Thinking Tips.”

Doug Haight will shoot the first set of tips. We will post these, unedited, to the FourSight youtube.com channel, and ask a broad collection of friends, including colleagues and classmates, to “vote” by clicking “like” on the tips they like and “share” on the tips they like enough to share with others.

In addition to this “gut” level feedback from friends, I will also solicit detailed feedback from professionals in video, television and film. These include Liz Reeves, who

Appendix A

does documentary film for public television, Al Williams, who works for Oprah, and Charlie Stone, a video producer who developed a “Tip Vision” video platform that has amassed over 100,000 hits. Their feedback will influence the final round of professional tips I shoot with Doug.

My aim is to shoot 5-8 finished tips by the end of March. In early April, I’ll edit them into polished clips. Along the way I will construct a marketing plan to “release” the thinking tips in a way that can garner attention and gain momentum.

I believe the combination of observing great work (TED Talks), deliberately practicing to create one speech after another (dozens of 2-minute thinking tips drafts), and getting formal and informal feedback to constantly improve and upgrade the product will speed me up the learning curve I have to climb to become an extraordinary speaker. I’ll also make a deliberate study of social media, primarily youtube.com, to better understand how that video series can captivate and spread to a larger audience.

January

Journaling ongoing (beginning Jan 6, 2012)

Reading research to collect story ideas ongoing

Apply to deliver an expo at the European Creative Problem Solving Conference (CREA)

Coaching, counseling ongoing (personal and sales)

Attend Dale Carnegie course on public speaking (2 day) Jan 30-31

Mentor relationship around “voice” with marketing guru Lawrence Niesler

Conversations about the masters project with Dorte, Sue, Blair, Russ, Stavros

Experiment with social media: Facebook, LinkedIn group forums, Twitter

Appendix A

Concept and write a series of draft tips to refine voice

February

Journaling, coaching, counseling ongoing

Reading research to collect story ideas ongoing

Study TED talks (Ken Robinson, Jane Goodall, Daniel Pink)

Collect images of female role models (i.e. newscasters, interviewers, etc.)

Refresh FS newsletter and voice with Russ

Update resume, bio & get professional headshot

Conversations with Dorte, Russ, Doug, Margie

Interview on a radioblog about creativity and innovation for the Corporate Learning Institute

Begin to produce 2-minute videos (goal for Feb: 10 rough drafts)

Professionally shoot first three video tips

March

Journaling, coaching, counseling ongoing

Reading research to collect story ideas ongoing

Study more TED talks (Nancy Duarte, Daniel Pink, 20 most viewed)

Collect feedback from first team of feedback givers

Incorporate feedback into final drafts

Professionally shoot 2-5 additional Thinking Tips

Develop a mentor relationship re: marketing with retired executive Gene Murtha

Appendix A

April

Edit final thinking tips and post to FourSight's YouTube channel

Develop a social media strategy for launching the Thinking Tips

Run the Expo at CREA April 22 and get feedback

Integrate feedback into my key learnings

Record and document for Chapter 4

Compile Chapter 5 and complete Project Paper

May

Submission

Rounds 1&2 of Edits/corrections

Deliver findings at CEE (post project): "How to Make Creativity Go Viral"

Time estimation	Hours
Working on Concept Paper	25
Shaping the overall concept	8
Formal training in speaking	15
Concept development, researching, writing and recording a series of 15 draft "thinking tip" videos	75
Documenting the learning process of "finding my voice"	15
Shooting "final" versions of 10 video tips	25
Incorporating feedback to improve my speeches & videos	10

Appendix A

Writing my final paper	15
Feedback	5
Finalizing project	5
Presentation	5

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APPENDIX B

Links to the *Two-Minute Thinking Tips*

Appendix B

Links to the *Two-Minute Thinking Tips*

The “Smart” Response to New Ideas...(hint: It isn’t criticism)

<http://youtu.be/ZJggBYxdw1Q>

Business vs. Busy-ness: The demise of Kodak

<http://youtu.be/K-LEWEHf7VM>

The Nose on your Face: The value of cognitive assessment

http://youtu.be/ugk_nmXzTR4

What makes a Mozart? Secrets of extraordinary performance

<http://youtu.be/ZP7bpDcBt3c>

Brainstorming doesn't work ...or does it?

<http://youtu.be/rONdBsuAPfI>

Other Links

Sarah’s FourSight radio interview with the Corporate Learning Institute:

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/corplearning/2012/02/23/learn-how-innovation-can-build-and-sustain-profitability-in>

“Build More Innovative Teams” video

<http://youtu.be/XZcomlKPeT8>

APPENDIX C

Script Sample

Appendix C

Script Sample

Script for: The “Smart” Response to New Ideas...(hint: It isn’t criticism)

What if I told you I could raise your IQ by 10 points in the next 2 minutes?

Growing up, I wasn't the smartest person in the class. Roger Wu was the smartest person in the class. You could tell because every time the teacher asked a question, Roger's hand went up. And if there was a spelling error, he spotted it. [Hand up.] His mind was like a heat seeking missile, if he saw an error, he'd blow it up.

Roger Wu was my idea of smart.

Imagine my surprise to study creativity as an adult and learn that new ideas can't survive heat-seeking missiles. New ideas are "New" fragile, they are "babies" and they often start out looking a little funny and awkward. They need nurture and guidance. They don't need people looking for errors and blowing them up.

So if not criticism and correction, what do you do with a new idea? There is a tool that can help you validate the messenger and strengthen the idea.

It's called Praise First. And guess what the first step is?? Praise. Say what you like about the idea. Say what's great about it. Say what you see might be possible if the idea came true.

Then you can express your concerns, phrased not as criticism, but as open questions: How might we get funding for that? What are all the ways we could we get Janice on board?

If you give someone Praise First, they know you've seen the idea from their eyes. And your questions have made it clear that you're interested in strengthening the idea. They'll think you're IQ went up 10 points. (You're welcome.)

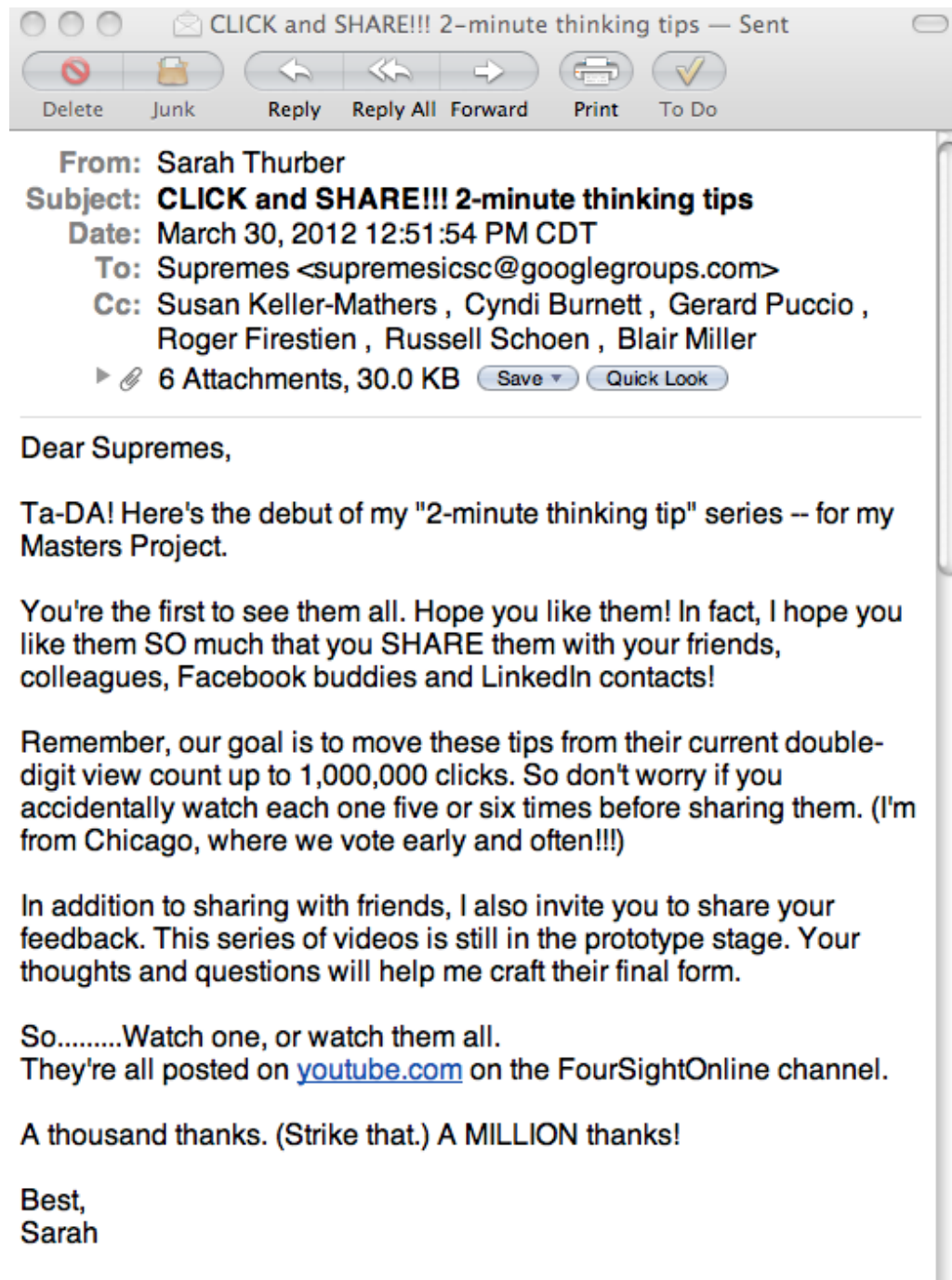
So the next time you hear a new idea, resist blowing it up with a heat-seeking missile. Try Praise first. Not only will you appear smarter, you may just help grow a great new idea.

APPENDIX D

Email to Solicit “Clicks”

Appendix D

Email to Solicit “Clicks”



APPENDIX E

Search Optimization Strategies

Appendix E

Search Optimization Strategies

Video	Built on	Post Date	Strategies	Worked	Didn't work	Next time	Clicks Mar 31	Clicks Apr 28
Brainstorming doesn't work or does it?	Brains hark	25-Mar	Built in Brainshark to embed text, posted in FS newsletter, blog, & FB, LI, sent to Supremes	Enthusiasm of being the first one	Not published in HD. Sound.	Use pro mic on the title frame sound	144	251
What makes a Mozart?	Brains hark	28-Mar	Used Google insights to find "Extraordinary Performance" title, posted on my own facebook page with plea to "click" and "share".Used the black title page, rather than my image.	jewel tone shirt! Broader appeal of message. Keyword: Mozart	Over 2 min. still stiff in my performance.	loosen up. Get more expressive, more personal. From the heart	55	105
What makes a Mozart? ALTERNATE	Brains hark	29-Mar	Added music to the front end and tested to see if the "talking head" image would get more clicks than the "word title" image	Music was clever. Also creating a duplicate video doubled the click rate	Needed matching music at the end	go for the "sandwich" effect for front and back	46	64
The Nose on your Face	Final Cut	30-Mar	Supreme email. ICSC faculty. Friends, Neighborhood email list. Launched paid ad campaign April 25.	This was the first one I actually recorded.	I was nervous. Eye contact wandered off lens.	Practice speech looking at a piece of tape on the wall	18	272
Business v. Busy-ness	Final Cut	30-Mar	Supreme email. ICSC faculty. Friends, Neighborhood email list.	Introduced the idea of a real-time exercise	Not tied to creativity or innovation	ask people to pause the video to do tip	11	77
"Smart" response to new ideas	Final Cut	30-Mar	Supreme email. ICSC faculty. ICSC Twitter. Personal FB x2. Personal emails to friends, neighbors, colleagues. Published in N&I newsletter April 26.	Good sound. Great tool. This performance felt the freest	Wish I had a way to credit tool and offer more info	Figure out a "credits" page	54	452
Total clicks after 34 days							328	1221

APPENDIX F

Youtube.com Analytics

Appendix F

Youtube.com Analytics

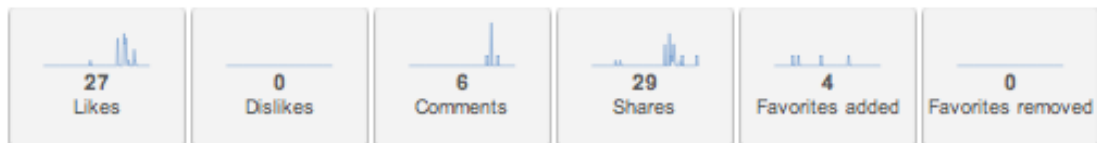
Channel: FourSightOnline

This year (Jan 1, 2012 – Apr 28, 2012)

Performance



Engagement



Top 10 videos [Browse all videos](#)

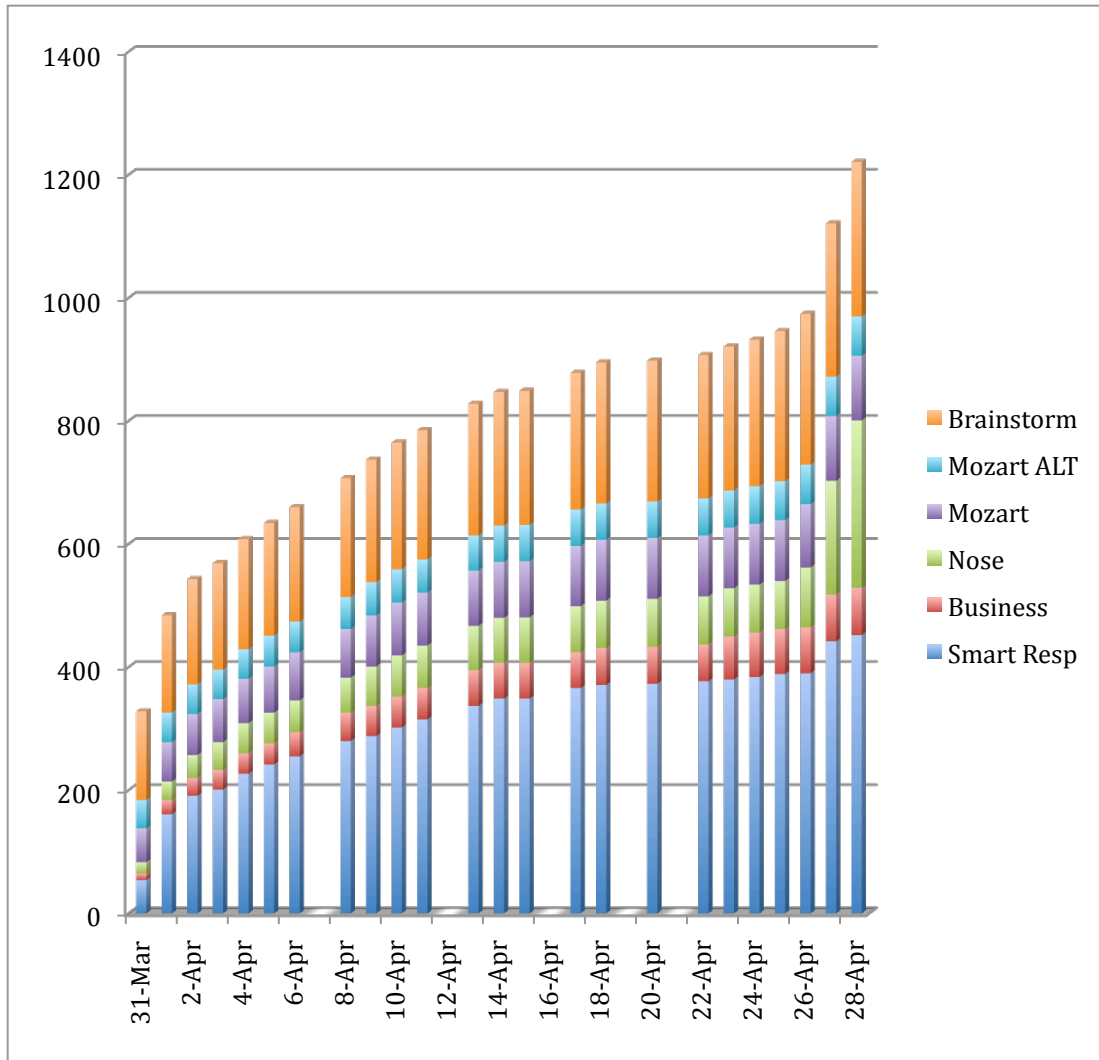
	Video	Views ↓	Likes	Comments
1.	Build More Innovative Teams	697	4	0
2.	The "Smart" Response to New Ideas...(hint: It isn't c...	430	7	0
3.	Brainstorming doesn't work ...or does it?	247	1	3
4.	The Nose on your Face: The value of cognitive asse...	176	1	1
5.	Innovative Team — book trailer	169	2	0
6.	What makes a Mozart? Secrets of extraordinary perf...	104	4	0
7.	Business vs. Busy-ness: The demise of Kodak	75	4	1
8.	What makes a Mozart? Secrets of extraordinary perf...	64	4	1

APPENDIX G

Daily Click Count

Appendix G

Daily Click Counter



APPENDIX H

Official Headshot and Biography

Appendix H

Official Headshot and Biography



Sarah Thurber

Biography

A leader in innovation and creativity, Sarah Thurber is the Managing Partner at FourSight, LLC, a publishing firm that specializes in developing research-based tools to enhance team performance.

For the last 10 years, Sarah has worked in partnership with academic researchers and top innovation consultants to develop *FourSight: Your Thinking Profile* along with a range of other online and print-based training tools that support cognitive diversity and creative problem solving. FourSight tools have served as a platform for promoting innovation for clients like Nike, Disney, HP, IBM, Kraft, Prudential, L'Oreal, the BBC and the Canadian Government. Thanks to Sarah's leadership, and the rigorous application of FourSight tools and principles, the FourSight company itself has doubled in size in the last two years.

Sarah first encountered the world of creative studies, as President of THinc Communications when she agreed to edit and publish the training manual *Creativity Unbound – An Introduction to Creative Process*. Now in its 5th edition, has been translated into Spanish, French and Japanese and Sarah is officially a coauthor.

In 2011, she was instrumental in spearheading the publication of the Jossey-Bass book, *The Innovative Team*, a FourSight business fable by authors Chris Grivas and Gerard Puccio. In 2012, she developed *Your 2-Minute Thinking Tip* video series for FourSight as part of her graduate work at the International Center for Studies in Creativity.

After a career that took her on assignment throughout the U.S., Europe, Asia and Africa, Sarah is happy to settle in Chicago and help her FourSight clients tap two inexhaustible sources of energy: innovation and creativity.